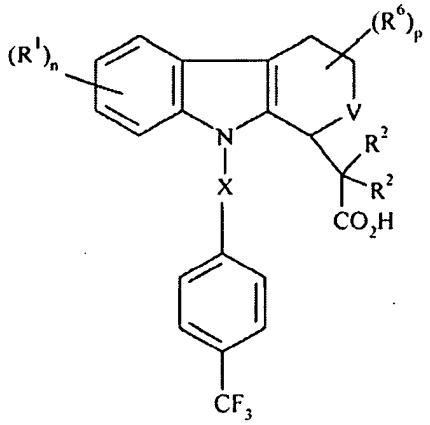
Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1 to 4 (Canceled)

Claim 5 (Currently Amended) A compound according to formula II:



II

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, where ~~V, X, n, p, R^1, R^2 and R^6 are as defined in claim 4~~ V represents a bond, CH_2 or CH_2CH_2;

X represents SO_2 or CHR^3 where R^3 is H or a hydrocarbon group containing up to 10 carbon atoms which is optionally substituted with halogen, CF_3, C_{1-4}alkoxy or C_{1-4}alkylthio;

n is 0, 1, 2 or 3;

each R^1 is independently selected from nonaromatic hydrocarbon groups of up to 6 carbon atoms and $(CH_2)_q$-W where q is 0, 1 or 2 and W represents halogen, CN, CF_3, OR^4, $N(R^4)_2$, $S(O)_tR^4$ where t is 0, 1 or 2, CO_2R^4, tetrazole, $CON(R^4)_2$, $SO_2N(R^4)_2$, COR^5, $OCOR^5$ or phenyl or heteroaryl either of which optionally bears up to 3 substituents selected from halogen, CF_3, OCF_3, CN, OH, C_{1-4}alkyl, C_{1-4}alkoxy, C_{1-4}alkylthio or C_{1-4}alkoxycarbonyl;

each R^2 is independently H or C_{1-4}alkyl; or one R^2 group together with an R^6 group attached at the same ring position as the $-C(R^2)_2-Y$ moiety completes a spiro-linked hydrocarbon ring of 3-6 members;

R^4 represents H or a hydrocarbon group of up to 7 carbon atoms, optionally substituted with halogen, CN, CF_3, OH, C_{1-4}alkoxy or C_{1-4}alkoxycarbonyl; or two R^4 groups attached to the same nitrogen atom may complete a 5- or 6-membered heterocyclic ring;

R^5 represents R^4 that is other than H;

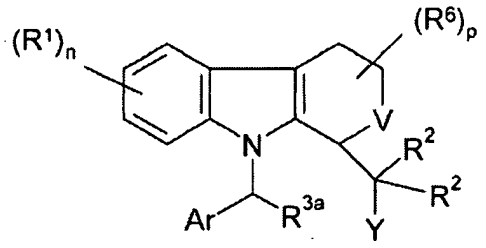
p is 0, 1 or 2; and

R^6 represents C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{2-6}alkenyl or phenyl, benzyl or heteroaryl, said phenyl, benzyl or heteroaryl optionally bearing up to 3 substituents selected from halogen, CN, CF_3, OCF_3, OR^4, CO_2R^4, COR^5, $OCOR^5$ and C_{1-4}alkyl; or an R^6 group together with an R^2 group may complete a spiro-linked hydrocarbon ring as defined previously;

with the proviso that if V is CH_2, X is CH_2, p is zero and each R^2 is H, then $(R^1)_n$ does not represent 6,8-difluoro.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended) A compound according to claim [[4]] 5 wherein X is CHR^3.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented) A compound according to claim 5 having formula III:



III

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, wherein R^{3a} represents a hydrocarbon group containing from 2 to 10 carbon atoms which is optionally substituted with halogen, CF_3, C_{1-4}alkoxy or C_{1-4}alkylthio; and ~~the remaining variables are as defined in claim 4~~

Y represents CO_2H, Ar represents 4-trifluoromethylphenyl, and both R^2 groups represent H,

with the proviso that R^1 does not represent SOR^4 or SO_2R^4.

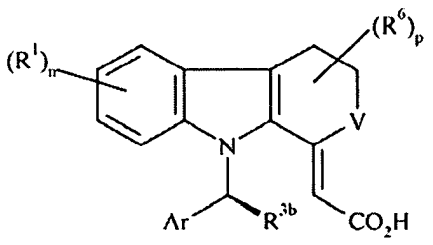
Claim 8 (Canceled)

Claim 9 (Currently Amended) A compound according to claim [[4]] 5 wherein n is 1 or 2 and each R^1 is independently selected from methyl, ethyl, isopropyl, n-butyl, t-butyl, cyclopropyl, Br, Cl, F, CN, CF_3, OCH_3, OCF_3, SCH_3, morpholin-1-yl, 4-fluorophenyl, 3,4-dichlorophenyl, 3-methylthiophenyl, 2,5-dimethylphenyl and 3-trifluoromethoxyphenyl.

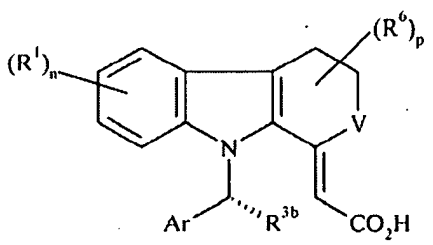
Claim 10 (Cancelled)

Claim 11 (Currently Amended) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound according to claim [[4]] 5 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

Claim 12 (Original) A process for preparing a compound of formula III as defined in claim 7 comprising the step of hydrogenating a compound of formula (11a) or (11b) over a chiral $Ru(BINAP)Cl_2$ catalyst:



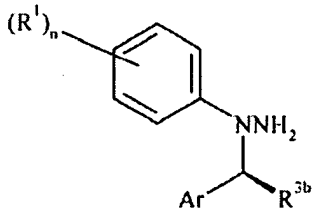
(11a)



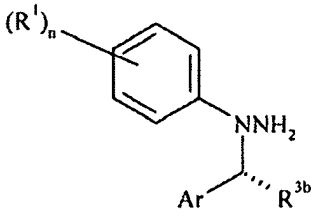
(11b)

wherein BINAP is bis(diphenylphosphino)-1,1'-binaphthyl and R^{3b} is R^3 that is other than H.

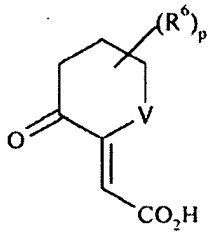
Claim 13 (Currently Amended) The process of claim 12 wherein the compound of formula (11a) or (11b) is obtained by reaction of a compound of formula (5a) or (5b) with a compound of formula (10):



(5a)



(5a)



(10)